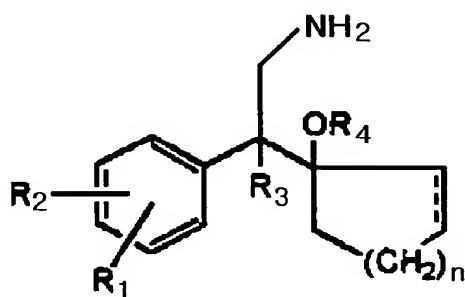


ABSTRACT

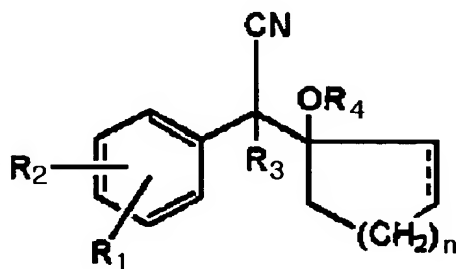
A process for the preparation of a compound of formula I,



(I)

wherein R_1 and R_2 are ortho or para substituents, independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxyl, C_1 - C_6 alkyl, C_1 - C_6 alkoxy, C_7 - C_9 aralkoxy, C_2 - C_7 alkanoyloxy, C_1 - C_6 alkylmercapto, halo and trifluoromethyl; R_3 is hydrogen or C_1 - C_6 alkyl; R_4 is hydrogen, C_1 - C_6 alkyl, formyl or C_2 - C_7 alkanoyl; n is one of the integers 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4; and the dotted line represents optional olefinic unsaturation;

comprising hydrogenating a compound of formula III,



(III)

in the presence of a nickel or cobalt catalyst at a temperature of about 5°C to 25°C .